



Between the Lines - Fact Sheet

When: July 13 – July 30, 2013

Where: University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa

What: Between the Lines (BTL) is a two-week program for young Russian and American students who are interested in creative writing, either as a pastime or as a career. It is a cultural exchange program which is now in its second year of programming. The State Department Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (Cultural Programs Division) in partnership with the University of Iowa will offer the opportunity for them to grow as writers and participate in a conversation about and exploration of creative writing and literature.

The program will host 10 writers aged 16-19 from Russia for a residency at the University of Iowa. The activities will include writing workshops both in English and Russian, seminars on literary topics, cultural visits, and other local events. The young writers will be immersed in the premier creative writing culture in the United State as part of an exchange that will broaden and sharpen their writing skills, deepen their understanding of American society, build bridges with young American writers who will participate in creative language classes alongside the ECA-sponsored writers from Russia. At the culmination of the on-site program, students' writings in both English and Russian will be collected into a printed booklet to be used for educational purposes. This year's visit will finish with two days spent touring the cultural and literary highlights of Washington D.C.

Russian participants will travel to and from the United States with a Russian teacher who will accompany the students as a chaperone. The chaperone will have the chance to enrich his/her teaching and writing skills during his/her time in the United States and will participate fully in the cultural exchange.

The BTL Program will cover costs for this cultural and creative exchange, including international travel and food and lodging in the United States, and will provide coverage of other expenses associated with the students'/chaperone's cultural exchange in the United States. Lodging in Moscow and in-country travel across Russia in preparation for the trip are generally not covered by the program, but limited funding may be available to needy participants on a case-by-case basis.

Who: The BTL Program is looking for talented, curious, enthusiastic young writers of fiction and/or poetry who meet the following criteria:

- Age 16, 17, 18, or 19 as of July 13, 2013
- Able to demonstrate proficiency in English and Russian (reading, writing, and speaking)
- Able to engage and thrive in an atmosphere that brings together different kinds of people and views

Requirements for chaperone applicants who will accompany the participants:

- Age 25- 40 as of July 13, 2013
- Proficiency in English (reading, writing and speaking)
- A reliable, mature adult willing to take on the dual responsibilities of his/her own writing program as well as the young participants' needs.

Preferred occupation and skills: An ideal chaperone might be a secondary school teacher who is interested in creative writing, both personally and professionally, and who is familiar with creative writing teaching methods; who has not previously been to the United States; and who is ready to assume duties of overseeing secondary school students on an international cultural exchange.

Deadlines: All student and chaperone applicants should complete application materials and e-mail them by March, 15, 2013 to the U.S. Embassy contacts listed at the end of this fact sheet. They should reflect the following information:

- Nominee's full name as it appears on his/her international passport (if available)
- City and country of birth (as it appears on his/her international passport, if available)
- Country of residency
- Country of citizenship
- Nominee's date of birth
- Nominee's e-mail address and mobile phone number

Applications must include:

- A writing sample of 6-8 pages of fiction and/or poetry in English
- A writing sample of 6-8 pages of fiction and/or poetry in Russian (different document)
- A brief one-paragraph statement of purpose in English describing why writing is important to the life of the applicant and what he/she hopes to learn during the BLT Program
- 2-5 pages in either language (Russian or English) as a response to one of the following writing prompts:
 - A person comes home and sees that someone new is moving into the apartment next to them. In the hallway is giant cage with a colorful bird that talks, an open box full of shiny black shoes and a strange machine the person has never seen before. The new neighbor's door is open ... and what happens? Write a short story or poem.
 - Write a story or poem inspired by the following statement: "Everything has beauty but not everyone sees it."

All writing samples must be in 12-point font with 1-inch margins all around.

Post your questions on our Facebook wall: www.facebook.com/btlwriters

Contacts at the American Embassy in Moscow:

Emily Kenealy, Assistant Cultural Affairs Officer, KenealyEA@State.gov

Kemal Tarba, Cultural Affairs Assistant, TarbaK@State.gov

Tatyana Romanova, Cultural Affairs Assistant, RomanovaT@State.gov

Contact at the University of Iowa:

BTL Program Coordinator Kelly Morse kelly-morse@uiowa.edu